

BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 16, 2007

The monthly meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, July 16, 2007, in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street in Bristol, RI. The Chairperson, William A. Estrella, Jr, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:08 PM.

Present: William A. Estrella, Jr., Marjorie J. McBride, William M. O'Dell, Paul E. Brule, Diana B. Campbell, David L. Dugan, Karen A. Lynch and John P. Saviano; Edward P. Mara, Superintendent; Melinda L. Thies, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction; Jane F. Correia, Director of Administration and Finance; Mary Cerullo, Executive Director of Literacy K-12, Elementary Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Leslie A. Neubauer, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; and Kevin McAllister, Esq., for Andrew D. Henneous, Esq., District Solicitor

Absent: Paul Silva

OPENING BUSINESS

All present were invited to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Mr. Estrella asked for a moment of reflection on the passing of Pete Janitto, a former School Committee Member and scout leader, who, by example, was a very positive influence on the youth of Warren. He professed that it is not important what other people think, it's more important to do the right thing on your own.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Patricia Brum, of Edmund Lane in Bristol, has a daughter entering fifth grade at Guiteras, who has been bussed from her grandparents' house on State Street, who provide daycare. When they registered her other daughter for kindergarten, she was told no bus would be provided from State Street, because Guiteras is out of their bussing zone. Since she and her husband begin work at 6:00 and 6:30 AM, they absolutely must bring their girls to their grandparents in the morning because the COZ Program does not start until 7:00 AM. Mrs. Brum stated that a bus does go down State Street that eventually ends up at Guiteras. She pleaded to have the bus stop for her daughters. Mr. Estrella responded that the Committee had had to make a conscious effort to draw the line on bus routes because of the restricted budget and the whole community is going to feel the difference in the enforcement of policy; bus routes just cannot be changed. He asked the Superintendent to look into Mrs. Brum's specific case.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. McBride asked to remove item B.3. from Superintendent's Recommendation #S2007-25 Personnel from the consent vote.

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve the consent agenda absent item B.3. of Recommendation #S2007-25; Mr. O'Dell seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Mrs. McBride motioned to seal the minutes to the June 25, 2007 Executive Session. Mr. Brule seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. O'Dell said the next Subcommittee meeting is Monday, July 23rd at 6:00 PM in the Superintendent's Office; discussed will be capital projects. Any specific requests should be forward to Mr. O'Dell in sufficient time to be placed on the agenda.

POLICY/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Recommendation #PCA2007-08: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy JEC School Admissions and JEC-R School Admissions (Second Reading)

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve; Mr. O'Dell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Recommendation #PCA2007-09: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy IGBG Tutoring (Homebound Instruction) (Second Reading)

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve; Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Recommendation #PCA 2007-12: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy CH Policy Implementation/Development of Regulations (Second Reading)

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve; Mr. Saviano seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Recommendation #PCA 2007-13: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Policy/Community Affairs Subcommittee, approve the revised School Committee Policy IGDF Fundraising (Second Reading)

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve; Mr. Saviano and Mr. Brule seconded. After discussion and advice from Mr. McAllister, Mrs. McBride motioned to amend the recommendation thusly--the second to the last line in paragraph four should read "Exceptions, such as fundraisers for special circumstances, will be determined by the

Superintendent, upon recommendation of the Principal, prior to the fundraising activity.” Mrs. Lynch seconded. The motion to amend passed by a vote of 8 to 0. The motion to approve the recommendation as amended passed unanimously.

PERSONNEL/CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Estrella reported for Mr. Silva; the Superintendent will inform the Committee in Executive Session of contract issues.

CHAIRPERSON’S INITIATIVES

School Committee Issues List

Mr. Estrella reported no significant changes in the list.

Future Workshop Agenda Items

Mr. Estrella has received responses from three members; the secretary and he will schedule the discussions; any further items should be forwarded to the secretary.

School Committee Goals

Mr. Estrella asked each member to review the goals so the Committee can focus on three of them at the August meeting.

Mt. Hope Dropout Rate

The Committee discussed the dropout reports for the years 2000-01 through 2005-06. Dr. Mara informed the Committee that starting in 2006-07, students who take five years to finish high school will be counted as a dropout in that fifth year; those students will receive a Mt. Hope diploma and not a Regents diploma. Mrs. McBride took great umbrage to this and suggested a letter be sent to the state department. Dr. Mara also reported that parents are being alerted to the importance of good attendance and being on time for class; the court system at the high school has improved the problem dramatically. Mr. Estrella reiterated the point of good attendance; poor attendance stands out as a factor in the results of a survey of dropouts. This should be a School Committee goal. Good attendance is paramount for the structure of transition. Although the dropout numbers have dropped quite a bit since 2000-01, we must continue to strive to diminish the numbers; it is a social problem as much as an educational issue.

Dr. Mara said the graduation rate is 84%; ramp up programs have been designed to boost student success but it is imperative that students show up, and on time. Lack of motivation is another contributing factor. Dr. Mara, Mrs. Thies and Mrs. Cerullo have concentrated efforts on the eighth to ninth grade transition where the decision to dropout most often takes seed. Also being targeted is the fifth to sixth grade transition. Mr. Estrella commented that the entire community influences students and their attitude toward attendance, noting Eugene Zimmerman's K-12 perfect attendance record and

Augie Arruda's perfect high school attendance. He knows of a young man who was applying for the Coast Guard and they took five points off his exam because he had a GED rather than graduated high school.

Parents are kept informed of their student's progress and attendance and if the student is at risk of failing; all students will have an individual education plan. Mrs. Thies explained that we started looking at eighth grade students for risk signs; both Mrs. Sadler and Mr. Murgo contact parents of students recommended for special programs. Dr. Mara mentioned that students who leave the district and do not register elsewhere in the state or are home schooled get counted as a dropout. Mr. Estrella and Dr. Mara strongly encouraged families to ask their children what they did in school today and press for more of an answer than "nothing." Mr. Estrella asked Dr. Mara to prepare a presentation for the September workshop, also a list of programs in place for students at risk.

COLT/ANDREWS CONSTRUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. McBride reported that the Committee awarded the construction bid to Lusi Construction. The Attorney, Program Manager and Architect will draw up the contract and are meeting on Thursday at 1:00 PM to discuss logistics. Mrs. McBride reminisced that three years ago Mrs. Lynch, Mrs. Stephanie Richardson, Dr. Mara, she and a few others started a campaign to pass this bond referendum and

there were weeks when she and Dr. Mara had meetings four out of five nights. She publicly thanked the people who worked so hard to get this bond passed. Mr. Dugan commented that it was the Subcommittee's Chair, Mrs. McBride, who really made this project work.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND ISSUES

Recommendation #S 2007-25 A-D: Personnel (supported by the Personnel/Contract Subcommittee)

A. SUMMER SCHOOL/ENRICHMENT PROGRAM: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the following individuals for the Summer 2007 session only of the Bristol Warren Regional Summer School/Enrichment Program contingent upon sufficient enrollment:

Name Course

- 1. Peter Cook * H.S. Mathematics**
- 2. Debra Marshall M.S. Substitute**
- 3. Margaret McKiernan M.S. Substitute**

*** Pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements**

B. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint the

following applicants to the extracurricular positions listed below for the 2007-08 school year only (pending certification, funding and sufficient sign-ups to warrant running these programs):

COACHES ¡V MT. HOPE HIGH

Sport Position Coach

- 1. Football Asst. Coach John Mello ***
- 2. Football Asst. Coach William DeMello ***
- 3. Hockey Head Coach Scot Clark (tabled)**

*** Pending satisfactory completion of pre-employment requirements**

C. LEAVE OF ABSENCE: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to grant a leave of absence for a Secondary Library/Media Specialist as follows:

- 1. Lisbeth Chew Library/Media Specialist ¡V Mt. Hope High**
Effective: For the 2007-08 School Year
Reason: Leave in accordance with Article 21,
Section L3 of the Master Agreement

D. RESIGNATION: That the School Committee confirm the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignation of Rebecca Wingstrom from the position of Secondary English as a Second Language Teacher/Special Educator as listed below:

**1. Rebecca Wingstrom English as a Second Language Teacher/
Special Educator jV Mt. Hope High
Effective: Immediately
Reason: Personal**

**2. Michael P. Monahan Director of Guidance jV Mt. Hope High
Effective: July 20, 2007
Reason: Personal**

Item B. 3. will be discussed in Executive Session.

Recommendation #S 2007-26: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of a family to home school their third, fifth and sixth grade children (3), adhering to all requirements as set forth by the Bristol Warren Regional School District.

Mrs. McBride motioned to approve; Mr. Brule seconded. Home schooling recommendations should be made for only one year; from this time forward, this will be specified in the recommendation. Mrs. Campbell asked if an attempt is made to change parents' minds about home schooling their children; Dr. Mara explained that the District tries to work with parents and provide them with materials and opportunity to participate in testing, activities, etc. and caution people they need to have the ability and skills to teach, especially when it comes to algebra or calculus; also online courses are

available. Some families use this as an escape. The motion to approve passed by a vote of 8 to 0.

Recommendation #S 2007-27: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, award the bid for the electrical upgrade for the Mary V. Quirk Pavilion at Hugh Cole School to Commercial Electric, Inc., for the amount of \$26,249.

Mr. Brule motioned to approve; Mr. O'Dell seconded. Mrs. McBride suggested tabling this project until the budget is more settled. Mrs. Correia confirmed that this project has been budgeted.

Comments:

„X This appropriation was made last year and is \$20,000 less than expected, the students need this upgrade for their computers and work must begin right away for completion before the beginning of the school year.

„X This job is overdue and must be done now.

„X The more money we put into Hugh Cole now, the less likely Warren voters are to approve Phase II.

„X This money could be used in the needy buildings in Bristol, Byfield and Reynolds.

„X We should not hold students hostage for a political battle.

„X We sell people short if we believe we need to sell one town on the other town's need.

„X Holding back resources that need to be expended for this and next fiscal year until we have a plan in place will delay those things that

need to be done now.

„X The Mary V. Quirk Pavilion of Hugh Cole is 25 years old and needs about \$4.5M worth of work.

„X The in-fighting between the two towns is disappointing; this board feels more politically motivated; this is one district and we must do what is best for the entire district.

On a show of hands, the motion to approve passed by a vote of 6 to 2 with Mrs. McBride and Mrs. Lynch voting no.

Recommendation #S 2007-28: That the School Committee, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and supported by the Budget/Facilities Subcommittee, award the bid for the paving of the student parking area at Mt. Hope High School to J.H. Lynch & Sons, Inc., for the amount of \$142,054.55.

Mr. Oj!Dell, seconded by Mr. Brule, motioned to approve. Mrs. McBride does not feel this money should be spent on the high school this year; she feels the Committee has not thought about it hard enough and we should confer with the Boosters Club. After discussion, it was agreed that this would be a very advantageous time to lay sleeves under the pavement which could be used to run wiring and water to the fields.

Mr. Oj!Dell motioned to amend the recommendation to include the installation of two pipes. Mr. Brule seconded. The motion to amend passed by a vote of 7 to 1 with Mrs. McBride opposed.

The motion to approve the recommendation as amended passed by a

vote of 7 to 1 with Mrs. McBride voting no.

District Fields / Lacrosse

Mrs. McBride reported that lacrosse play is being suspended from Colt State Park for one year in order to repair the fields; the Bristol and Warren Recreation Departments are offering help with alternative locations. The fields situation has been under discussion for some years; there are several issues with maintenance, use and scheduling. Dr. Mara assured lacrosse families that there will be a place for the students to play. This topic will be placed on the August agenda for further discussion. Mrs. Lynch asked if lighted fields could be used by the lacrosse team if they make it to the state finals again. The biggest issue for the high school fields is with non-school related teams.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - 8:53 PM

In accordance with Open Meeting Laws 42-46-5(a)(1)-(9), 2(b), Mr. Brule motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:53 PM for legal advice and discussion of personnel and contract issues. Mrs. McBride seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

RESUMPTION OF MEETING 9:25 PM

Discussed in Executive Session were the topics mentioned above.

Superintendent's Recommendation #S2007-25 B. 3: appointment of Mt. Hope Hockey Coach.

Mr. Estrella entertained comments from the public.

John Dougherty, parent of a Mt. Hope hockey player, spoke on behalf of the Assistant Hockey Coach, who was not the recommended candidate for the head coach position. He and many of the other parents feel the awarding of this position was not fair; the Committee does not see much of what goes on during the year. The Assistant Coach has been a very dedicated coach who devotes a great deal of his time to the players, on and off the ice. He has helped students who were struggling with their classes. Mr. Dougherty feels that it is wrong not to give the head coach position to a man who so patiently and ably put in six years as assistant and has earned the respect of the students. He also feels the Assistant is perhaps guilty by association, and although may not have agreed with the approach of the head coach, would not overstep his bounds as assistant; we owe him the chance for one year as head coach.

Ryan Dougherty, a hockey player for the past two years, said the Assistant Coach has been a friend, a parent, and one of the best people he knows. He feels the recommended candidate is qualified but does not know the personalities of the players the way the Assistant does. The few times the Assistant was able to lead the

team his own way, he did an amazing job. Ryan said he was always told that "Talent will take you so far, but strategy will win you the championship." He asked the Committee to look again at the Assistant Coach.

Mrs. Dougherty, Ryan's mother, said Coach Day is an alumna of Bristol High School and we need to support our people; we owe him one year. An assistant coach can say only so much; every player respected him. She asked the Committee to look at his credentials, what he has done and where he comes from.

Lori Vales, mother of a varsity hockey player, reiterated what the Doughertys said; the Assistant Coach has genuine concern for the players and has offered to help them with their academics; the respect for and from the players is evident. He is loyal to the community and to the students and he deserves a chance to do it his way.

Deb Lescault is a hockey parent and her husband was on the interview team. She feels the interview team was looking for the best qualified candidate they could find and the best person to perform; she supports the process. The corporate world does not support the entitlement culture; Mrs. Lescault feels that if we trust the judgment of the interview committee and the Athletic Director, we will have a good year-- different, but good.

Dr. Mara explained that the Athletic Director sets up the interview team who then interviews candidates and with the A.D. makes a recommendation to the Superintendent. If Dr. Mara has information that would not support the recommendation, he would tell the A.D.; in this case he did not, and so trusted the recommendation and forwarded it to the School Committee.

Mr. Saviano motioned to approve Superintendent's Recommendation #S2007-25 B.3.; Mrs. Campbell seconded. Mr. O'Dell felt this situation needs a closer look; if the recommendation comes back the same, so be it. Mr. Brule agreed. Mrs. McBride motioned to table the recommendation. Mrs. Lynch seconded. The motion to table passed by a vote of 5 to 3 with Mrs. Campbell, Mr. Dugan and Mr. Saviano opposed.

Mr. Estrella noted that all coaching appointments in all seasons go through the same process, through SchoolSpring, and all interested people should apply.

ADJOURNMENT 9:53 PM

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Brule, seconded by Mr. Saviano, motioned to adjourn at 9:53 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

**William M. Ojeda, Treasure, for
Paul Silva, Secretary**